

The Scientific Fighting Congress

Unarmed Versus



The Knife

The Definitive, Scientific Work on
Fighting Unarmed Versus An Edged Weapon Attack!

W. Hock Hochheim

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Unarmed Versus The Knife

Volume 3 of the Knife Fighting Encyclopedia Series

by W. Hock Hochheim

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by W. Hock Hochheim

Also by Hock Hochheim

The Knife Fighting Encyclopedia

Military Knife Combat

Shooting from the Hip

Finding Missing Persons

Punches

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PRIMER

Both military and criminal knife attackers find their motivations in a mixed continuum of skill and mission. The soldier may tackle a vital mission. The criminal may embark on evil. They may look mean and cuss worse. Neither may have any real training in the dynamics of knife combat. Few soldiers or criminals train to successfully maim and kill with a knife. Regardless of their skill level, going unarmed against even an incompetent knife attacker spells danger.

And what if you find yourself facing your worst nightmare—an athletic knife attacker with a killer mindset bent to do you harm, or worse —kill you? How skilled is he? How tight are his slashes— his stabs? Does he know how to support his knife assault with dirty tricks, hand strikes and kicks? Can he? How much adrenaline does he have pumping through his veins? How many drugs?

Why does he present an edged weapon in front of you now? To scare? To kidnap? To rob? To rape? To kill? Sometimes you can't run away from this knife. What if your kids are standing there? Your wife? Your husband? What if you are the only person under 60 years old at a restaurant or on an airplane when some crazed man starts brandishing a knife or a box cutter? You must stand up for yourself and everyone around you or someone may die. And if you have a knife or another weapon? Frequently, under sudden, ambush attack, even an armed person doesn't have time to assess the situation or pull a weapon. Sometimes one must first engage in unexpected, violent hand-to-knife combat in order to gain the opportunity to draw his or her weapon.

Unarmed vs. the Knife deals with these situations and many others. It gives you dedicated and intensive strategies and tactics to counter the knife attacker if you are unarmed.

Study Instructions

In order to better understand the concepts, first read through the entire book from start to finish to gain an overall perspective. Then re-read it slowly and practice the physical exercises. By reading the book in its entirety first, you will gain a better orientation of all its parts and how they actually fit together as you practice. This method allows you to see the big picture, a major concept often overlooked in other fighting systems.

No single tactic provides a magic bullet for every situation. Rather, a working savvy of all the concepts and how to use them will prove your salvations in most cases.

Unarmed vs. the Knife gives you the tools to fight back, and most importantly-it serves as a training format for you to gain experience and develop good reflexes in response to a knife attack. The book is designed to create an experience. It isn't designed for you to just read and look at the pictures. Experience is key to your education. Work through the drills, DO the physical work. Do it!

You have the chance to survive a knife attack if you are the one properly trained to fight back. Chance does favor the prepared mind. This Volume is dedicated to that cause. Almost any counter to a knife attack can look dangerous and, according to some critics, appear suicidal. But, I ask you? What are your current options? What would you prefer? To die? Or to die trying?

Do or die!

(Note: As a precursor to this book, the author recommends you study Volumes 1 and 2 of the Knife Fighting Series: The Knife Fighting Encyclopedia: The Foundation and Military Knife Combat. While this volume can stand alone as a study guide, each of the other two volumes offer foundational strategies and detailed discussions of many vital training areas found in this book.)

CHAPTER ONE

A Knife Attack

Unless you are in worst-case military situations, there is no rule, no requirement in law or life that compels you to jump on top of every person who holds a knife in front of you. Instead, what truly loom over your head are moral and ethical issues, decisions to make in a host of limitless predicaments. Most times it's simply not just a case of running away or jumping right into combat!

The knife wielder has three basic motivations: intimidation, greed, criminal intent and/or sheer violence. These are generic examples off which to work. Overlaps may exist. Get the idea that profiling the attacker's intent constitutes one way to plan your course of action if you have the savvy and time. Evaluate and profile the enemy. This may not require a great intellectual study. You will often just feel their motivation. One simple way to determine your course of action is to listen to the confronter's commands. For example:

"What are you looking at?" or similar words:

We might deduce this man is looking for trouble, but he might also be looking for attention, posturing to appear and feel powerful. He asks for no money or results but rather for your fear and in his twisted terms for your recognition and respect. Ignoring this person might provide more motivation and will probably just goad him on. Calmly leaving the area may prove your safest course of action.

"Give me your wallet!" or similar words:

We deduce he probably wants your money. He may or may not be dedicated enough to stick a blade into your face unless you jump on him and he must defend himself against your assault. Often victims simply acquiesce. They surrender their purse or wallet. Crime prevention tips suggest you throw the money down on the ground away from the direction in which you wish to leave. Tipsters say you should carry a robbery money clip of a few bucks, and use the weight of the clip to toss the booty. This sounds good, but few people actually cart such a clip for this very strategy.

"Give me you car keys!" or similar words:

This happens on the parking lot or street near your car where the criminal may easily determine which car is yours. He may or may not be dedicated enough to stick a blade into your face unless you jump on him and he in effect must

defend himself against you. Often victims simply acquiesce and let their insurance companies worry about replacing the car later.

"Come with me!" or similar words:

We deduce he probably has other plans for you, or wishes to get you away from potential witnesses. His order came at Crime Scene A. He wants to take you to Crime Scene B. Crime Scene B is where the killing usually occurs. A word to the wise is never go to Crime Scene B. Fight it out at Crime Scene A.

"You ain't taking me!" or similar words:

We deduce as the officer or soldier that we are going to have trouble containing and controlling this subject. He may have weapons. Get ready to counter weapon quick draws or draw your weapons and use what you have.

Silence! Or no words:

If your knife attacker's mission is to simply lash out and kill you the citizen, then he is crazed, and the fight might well be on. There have been several reported group stabbings in the United States and Europe since the year 2000 where deranged persons have walked through crowds randomly stabbing people. Their hectic pace precludes any type of follow-up fight. Many of the victims reported the feel of first being bumped or punched, but not stabbed.

Our psyches find the so-called random attack the most frightening of all, because we are powerless to anticipate or prevent it. Deep in the psychopath's mind, there is technically no random attack. You have been selected for reasons recognizable only to him. Maybe you resemble his brother, or you have been selected for some insane and twisted logic that a sane person would never fully understand.

If a silent enemy soldier attacks you, he probably has a mission to go through you to obtain some other objective. You represent a random obstacle to that mission, whether you huddle on a battlefield or stand sentry. Wrong place. Wrong time. You'd better have incredible reflexives and luck. Bank on the reflex, but don't count on the luck.

Facts about the Criminal Intent and Action

The following represents a collection of research conducted during my 30 plus years of study, state and federal legal research, tactical training and experience about what criminals do with knives and how they use them against you. A supporting, generalized study about crimes and other weaponry also helps provide you with an accurate picture of what these individuals might do.

- Robberies are surprise, ambush attacks, usually calculated out to some degree.
- Overall national studies over the last 30 years show

that about 80 percent of violent offenders brandished a weapon prior to the time they used it to commit a crime. Some 50 percent used guns, 20 percent used knives and 10 percent used other weapons. Other weapons listed were screwdrivers, lug wrenches, metal bars, pool cues, baseball shovels, boards, pepper spray, beer bottles or other items reachable that are not originally designed as weapons.

- Overall, most said they only wanted to intimidate their victims and gain control over the criminal situation rather than harm or dominate.
- Surprisingly high percentages of robbers tell interviewers and police that they had qualms about using the weapons they carried. Thirty-percent who used a gun, held an empty weapon. Ten to 15 percent used replicas guns.
- A changing percentage of reported felony crimes were documented as weapons-related but in fact, many would-be criminals threatened an unseen weapon, but did not display it. This is not an easily retrievable fact inside collected data.
- Thirty-percent of armed robbers or their partners hurt someone during the robbery. Robbers of individuals hurt their victim more than twice as often as commercial robbers.
- Most of the offenders researched who hurt their victim claim they did so because the victims resisted. Juveniles are more prone to hurt their victims than adults.
- Fifteen-percent of the robbers used physical force right at the onset to establish quick control and intimidation.
- Overall, robbers did not generally appear to use gratuitous force. A small percentage expressed delight in hurting their victims.

- The presentation of a gun or knife to counter a robber enjoys a fairly good success rate. Many of these instances go officially unreported and cannot be tabulated properly, but they do exist.
- Reasons why robbers pick specific individuals to rob vary. They often choose people who look like they won't or can't resist. Overall, 20 percent of the offenders chose their victims for convenience. Fifteen-percent chose their victims at locations that offered a fast getaway. Fifteen-percent selected anyone who looked like they had money. Other reasons are the psychological choices made by the suspect and run a gamut.

Only 6 percent of the population causes the vast majority of violent crime, some 70 percent. The other 30 percent of violent crime is committed by one-time offenders. This comprehensive information is still limited and can do no more than suggest plans to counter knife threats especially when you consider you may find yourself attacked on a dark street corner, alone, confronted by an armed criminal perhaps capable of anything, including murder. I should mention the multi-criminal, or military team ambush. In such cases, accomplices act as the “weapon-bearer's free-limb” and grab or corner you and you are dealing with multiple opponents.

How He Actually Wounds or Kills You!

The criminal or military knife attacker makes first physical contact with you in one of only two ways. He uses his knife as a first physical contact by stabbing or slashing at you, or he grabs you with his free limb and then uses the knife. These grabs can come at you from all sides and at any time, from walking down the street to sleeping in bed. Armed with this knowledge, it's important that you study the contents of this book and practice the counter strategies until they become part of your overall muscle memory. never forget that many survivors have been stabbed and slashed multiple times and have fought on to win the encounter.



First way: The enemy attacks and makes body contact with the knife first.



Second way: The enemy's first contact is a grab of the victim, and then he attacks with the knife.

Options for Survival

Option 1: The orderly retreat

Don't just turn and run! Conduct an orderly retreat. Simple running often encourages your enemy to chase you, and you are easier to kill from both a physical and psychological standpoint with your back turned! In studies conducted of military, criminal and human psychology, experts conclude to turn your back and run, an option often offered up in self-defense classes, is not always your best choice. Such flight can in some ignite a primal hunting drive in the attacker, firing him up not only to give chase, but also elevate his violence to a higher extreme. The solution, where possible, is to make an orderly retreat. A lack of an orderly retreat, since the days of Alexander the Great, has led to the slaughter

of individual victims and sometimes even entire armies.

Simply put, an orderly retreat is vital whenever possible. Military units must provide cover for one another as they retreat. This slows down the pursuit capability of the enemy. An entire chapter of study and several case histories exist on this subject in Volume 2 of this series. Citizens must improvise.

Option 2: Use the environment

Even in a you vs. him fight, there are three parties involved. You. Him. And the environment! There is always a physical place in time where this conflict happens, and you must use whatever you have to either batter him or use as a shield as you fight or retreat. Look around your daily travels and crisis-rehearse what handy items might be used in a violent confrontation of any kind, not just knife attacks.

Often there are barriers to use, get behind or use to maneuver around. This could be a couch or a tree. One robbery victim on a case I worked just ran into a lake about thigh deep. The crook, holding a knife and fully clothed, simply didn't want to get his boots wet. He left after only 5 minutes of tough talk.

Option 3: Alert any witnesses

In a civilian situation you may be confronted with a knife attacker in such a place that there might be nearby witnesses. Alarmed witnesses have often ended many crimes by scaring off the criminal. Many times in bar fights, friends of the attacker may be near and will take control of their friend. Sometimes they may help him! You will have to make a snap decision. Witnesses call the police or offer help.

In a military or police situation, your comrades may be within earshot, but so may his! If and when you call out, I urge you not to shriek in fear, but rather yell for help and attention in a confident manner. The fearful outcry only encourages the enemy. The confident voice may keep him at bay.

Option 4: Fight

Understand this entire book is based on what happens when Options 1 through 3 end. No place to run. Can't run. No weapons or shields. No time or there's nothing in the environment handy to use against the enemy. You are empty-handed vs. the knife. Practitioners often ask me for absolute techniques that will defeat an attacker in all encounters. I will not lie or try to fool them. All we can do is lay out the best plans possible and train based on those plans. You often have a chance to fight and win. Please take these step-by-step lessons seriously, as though your life depended upon them because it may.

A Defensive Stance

One of the most belabored issues in martial training is fighting stances. All the schematics involved are painstaking dictated with anal retentive focus. They all go straight to hell during the first instant of real combat. Mobility is the only key. Balance in motion is the rule.



When unarmed versus the knife, try to keep your arms up and turned inward when you are not actually using them. Stand somewhat bladed from the opponent and springy like an athlete prepared to run in any direction. Grab something ASAP!

“May all your enemies be ignorant and untrained!”

Knife Attack Overview

Two Types of Knife Attacks

- Criminal attack
- Military attack

The Three Motives of the Knife Attacker

- Intimidation
- Felony criminal intent
- Sheer violence

The Two Primary Ways of Knife Attack

- Knife makes first contact
- Free hand or arm (or accomplice) makes first con-

tact for a grab, then the knife comes in

Options for Survival

- Orderly retreat
- Use the environment
 - a) look for shields
 - b) look for weapons
 - c) use barriers
- Alert any possible witnesses
- Fight!

CHAPTER TWO

Unarmed Versus The Knife

Primer

There is not any one single tactic presented here, but rather a working knowledge and savvy of all of them that will most likely get you through the conflict. You will see and experience a lot from working through these drills. You must physically work through each step. Just reading it and looking over the photos will not work. Train your mind and body. In this Do or Die Training Module, the process is broken into three training progressions:

- 1) The Basic Training Series
- 2) The Advanced Training Series
- 3) The Masters Training Series

The Basic Training Series is the muscle memory you will drop back into no matter what the Advanced and Masters series may throw at you. The basic training, the containment and control of the weapon-bearing limb, and subsequent enemy bashing, is the foundation work of survival. It is the elementary and high school of your combat education. The Advanced Training Series is like college and the Masters Series is your Masters Degree. In our worst-case scenario, unarmed and forced to fight the knife attacker, here are your basic survival principles.

Principle 1) Control and Contain the Weapon Limb

Principle 2) Balance Disruption

Principle 3) Diminish

Principle 4) Take Him Down and Out

You control and contain the weapon-bearing limb by grabbing it in any manner, freezing it to prevent further attack upon you. You disrupt the balance of the enemy by kicking his legs. You diminish the enemy by smashing his head and neck. Then you take him down with grappling skills. You take him out of the fight by rendering him unconscious, disabling him, wrapping him up for control, or killing him.

These actions do not necessarily have to occur in this order, especially if

they are executed as viciously as they should be in microseconds. They are placed here in this manual in a very practical, common sense order for training purposes. No matter the order they manifest, these are your basic survival principles.

The Advanced Training Series Overview

We will explore many other options in the Advanced Training Series, like disarming, passing and countering grabs, but even in various aspects of advanced training, we will always resort back to these basic hardcore steps to finish the job. many of your “what-if-he-does-this” questions are important and will all be answered in the advanced training sections.

The Masters Training Series Overview

After considerable and maintained practice you may possess a certain level of mastery that permits you to perform things that beginners and intermediates should not emphasize. These concepts are explained in this section.

CHAPTER THREE

The Basic Training Series

Basic Training Progression 1: The 12 Angles of Assault

This first step in the progression involves learning the 12 angles of attack. This attack format will develop your skill and savvy, command and mastery of your weapon, and teach you how to attack your partner to develop skill. It is an attack training drill.

Some systems will exercise you with 4, 5 or 6 knife attack angles. This does not teach you to attack and defend as an advanced fighter. rather these 12 angles cover what a basic and advanced fighter will use against you. If you do not see these regularly you will be surprised when you see it coming at you, in the same way a baseball batter reacts to coping with his first curve ball.

The anatomy of the human body can only allow for certain kinds of attacks. These 12 angles, collected from martial, criminal and military history, adequately cover a comprehensive spectrum of stabbing and slashing. We will use these 12 angles of attack throughout the entire course. The 12 should be executed with saber and ice pick-or reverse grips.

The knife attack comes from saber and reverse grips, left and right-handed, standing, kneeling and on the ground.

The 12 Angle Attack Series

The 12 angles training drill is as follows:

Saber Grip. The enemy can slash, stab with the blade and hit you with the pommel.



Reverse Grip. The enemy can slash, stab with the blade and hit you with the pommel.



Left-handed or opposite-hand. You must learn to fight against righties and lefties.



Knee-high. Combat can reduce you and the enemy to knee-high fighting. Or he may simply hide behind something.



Work the 12 angles down and on your back.



Work the 12 angles on your left and right sides. Experience and note the difficulties.

The 12 Angle Attack Series
The 12 Angles Training Drill As Follows:



Angle 1 is an inward slash from the high right corner.



Angle 2 is a backhanded slash from a high left corner.



Angle 3 is an inward slash from a low hip-height right corner.



Angle 4 is a backhanded slash from a low hip-height left corner.



Angle 5 is a low, center-line stab.



Angle 6 is a high harpoon-like stab.



Angle 7 is a high stab from the left.



Angle 8 is a backhanded low slash.



Angle 9 is a low inward slash.



Angle 10 is a high hooking stab from the high right.



Angle 11 is a high hooking stab from the high left.



Angle 12 is downward overhead slash.

Basic Training Progression 2: Fight Back Mobility

Evasion and Invasion/Positioning Footwork vs. The 12 Angles

If you can walk and run, you already know fighting footwork. Mobility in combat is vital. Evading an edged weapon attack relies on two major points—footwork and the space in which to move, and an ability to dodge with your body. You can evade an attacker without fear of tripping when an altercation takes place in a rare open, flat area. But inside a house, a store, an office, a cave, a tunnel, a small room, or on rugged outdoor terrain, simple footwork alone—so often touted by the naïve and inexperienced as some supreme counter-measure to knife attacks—must truly be de-evaluated. This is what the police and military refer to as “broken terrain.”



*You may need both footwork
AND body dodging in case of a
knife attack.*

Too much martial fighting footwork training is limited to little more than boxing ring steps. Fighting footwork in real world combat is more like running an obstacle course combined with the famous boxing maneuvers like “step and slide” and “shuffle foot.” Before you enter into an area, take the time to scope it out, learn the layout, and the exits. Here are some basic martial footwork maneuvers you may use to train.

- 1) Stationary right foot-left foot steps forward and back:** This is an excellent advance and retreat step that keeps you in range. From a fighting stance, leave your right foot stationary and step forward with your left foot, then step back.
- 2) Stationary left foot-right foot steps forward and back:** This is an excellent advance and retreat footwork that keeps you in close range. Do this from a stationary left foot, with the right stepping forward and back. This is advance and retreat footwork.
- 3) Shuffle footwork (the pendulum):** If you are shuffling forward, let your rear foot come forward near your front foot, displace it, and let your front foot shift forward. Your feet do not have to hit together, or your rear foot does not have to knock the front one forward. But this is sometimes a wise practice for the beginner to learn the concept. The reverse is used for going backward. This is an exceptionally good move increasing the gap between you and your opponent in a retreat and to advance upon the opponent for delivering many of the low-line kicks conducive to knife fighting.
- 4) Lunge footwork:** Like a fencer, slightly lift your lead foot and propel yourself forward off your rear foot. Do the reverse for going backward. Lift your rear foot and spring back.
- 5) Lateral footwork:** From the fighting stance, if you choose to go a step to the right, then let your right foot step right. Let your left foot follow and move back into a stance. If you choose to go to the left, and then let your left foot step first to the left, then let your right foot follow. Then return to the stance. Try not to cross your feet, for this is a point of imbalance.
- 6) Side-by-side footwork:** The Letter Step - Imagine there is a “V” shape or an “L” shape on the floor in front of you, or an upside down “V” or reverse “L” in front of you.
 - a)** In the right side-up “V”, imagine there is an opponent in the open space of the “V”. With a 45-degree step to the left, or 45-degree step to the right, you are advancing and zoning to either one side or the other of the opponent. These may be shuffle or lunge steps. There are many variations, follow-up steps off of this basic pattern, which will subtly be covered in later study. In the upside-down “V”

you are retreating backward and then stepping forward from and to an opponent, with 45-degree steps to the right or left. These can be shuffle or lunge steps. There are many variation follow-ups also from this drill.

b) In the case of the “L” consider it the same way.

c) Or think of the hands of a clock and practice moving the lengths of differing times.

7) Rocker shuffle: From a fighting stance, slightly bounce your weight on your lead and rear feet shuffling back and forth, or side-to-side. Then change leads in motion and do so from there. Don't over exaggerate the bounce. Stay close to the ground.

8) Back peddling: It is important to be able to back quickly away from a situation. In the gym, learn how not to trip over your own two feet. In the real world you must be careful not to trip over objects, but a few clear feet to back peddle can save your life.

9) The obstacle course: All of the above mean little without your ability to negotiate a challenging set of real world obstacles and terrain. That's why the elite police and military require their exponents to regularly run and traverse obstacle courses. Many athletic endeavors require similar training.

10) Now run! Warriors run. They jog; they dash; they hop; they leap; they cut; they move through space. Never stop running as long as your legs still work. Run in all kinds of weather. A warrior toughens his or her soul by experiencing discomfort that comes from running. The residual benefits are also vital.

11) Do not practice barefoot. Training barefoot is like practicing to ice skate without skates. It just does not work. Wear what you will really wear when you think you may be attacked. Barefoot training also leads to more injuries to the ankles and to the feet.



Use the body to dodge and the feet to move you out of the way.

Evasion

Evasion can also mean just slipping out of the striking range of the weapon's immediate swing, using footwork and ducking to dodge the attack. From there you must either get away or invade to counter attack.

Train dodging as much as possible without having to slip up on your toes and bend over. Get up on your toes only as a last resort to gain the last possible inch of distance between yourself and the blade. Rising on your toes in this position leaves you off balance with no place else to go. Some modern fighting systems foolishly teach this maneuver as a first response. It's a mistake! This should be your last move.



Beware the "tip-toe" escape as a first response! You have nowhere else to go! The toes are the last ditch escape.



Use the footwork offered as an alternative.

Invasion

Your training partner attacks you with the 12 angles of attack using footwork, you invade whenever possible. If your attacker is untrained in proper weapon delivery, he will overuse his arm either in retracting his attack or over-swinging his attack.



When your training partner attacks you with the 12 angles, use footwork to evade. Then...



...charge back in.

Your Assigned Practice

You may increase your footwork by doing wind sprints. You may run tires and other basic football and sports training drills to develop mobility. Set up ever-changing obstacle courses and dash through them.

- . Practice dodging the 12 angles of attack. Have the trainer use a stalking method between each attack.
- . Practice first by dodging the 12 angles of attack, then blast in for an invasion. For now, try a simple face attack and cover of the weapon-bearing limb. You will learn much more of what to do after you invade in the following segments.

Basic Training Progression 3: Catch the Weapon-Bearing Limb Practice vs. The 12 Angles

Your training partner attacks you with the 12 angles. You dodge the blade and

practice grabbing the weapon-bearing limb.

So much about countering knife attacks is argued about and debated, and the topic of grabbing the limb brandishing the knife is one. Some martial sources proclaim it is simply too dangerous or impossible to grab an attacking limb, yet without exception, later in their dissertations they will mention the sometimes lifesaving value of grabs, even a grab of the knife blade itself, has been executed successfully many times. Often these same nay-sayers, just 10 minutes later will show you a combat scenario where they grab the weapon arm! They will order you never to grab the arm, then in the course of their takedown or throw they must grab the weapon-bearing limb.

Try to tell anyone who has been grabbed and then repeatedly stabbed or cut that they should not waste their time trying to stop and grab the weapon limb arm. More than likely that is how they survived! Under assault it becomes human nature to stop that which is coming in to slice or gut you into meat strips. A mature and enlightened instructor will take and build upon these instincts with skill developing drills. Simply put, people forced to fight in a knife confrontation and brainwashed into not grabbing the weapon-bearing limb, suffer from a severe and dangerous handicap.

One key to surviving military and criminal attack is to control and contain the weapon-bearing limb as soon as possible. This is very difficult against a skilled fighter with tight economic slashes or quick, pumping stab. But the longer the weapon's edge and tip remain free, the more damage it can do to you.

Is it hard to grab? That would depend on the speed, skill and endurance of the attacker. Remember, knife attack survivors are often injured numerous times and still fight on and win. This is usually accomplished by clutching the weapon-bearing limb during the assault. Yes, it is hard to grab. That is why you must practice.

Grab Primer

Grab with your hands, palms up, palms down, wrap with your arms, any life saving catch. Seize it in a vice grip and do not waste a microsecond to strike out with the next step in the progression.



Sample of a limb grab.



*Another sample of a limb grab.
Numerous examples exist.*



*Outside and/or inside the body
arm wrap traps.*

Clothing “Travel”

What you can execute

on the hot beach of the Archipelagos, you cannot do in Des Moines, Iowa half the year. Why? Jackets. Sweatshirts. Clothing.

Remember, grabbing the weapon-bearing limb of an armed assailant offers varying results dependant upon the clothing of the opponent. As the following series of photos show, you might clutch the bulky sleeve of a parka and push or pull as far as 6 inches before affecting the arm. Then the sleeve might just travel up the untouched arm inside. In a knife fight, certainly in a stabbing attack, where a half an inch may mean mortal injury, such knowledge is important.



The grip may not be a good one if you only come up with a handful of material.



If you grab and pull, you may only yank on the sleeve.



If you push the arm, you may not get what you want.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Practice dodging the attack, then grabbing vs. the 12 angles of attack.

Basic Training Progression 4: Catch and Kick Practice vs. The 12 Angles

This study progression introduces the kick into the combat mix next. You caught the arm. The split second you secure the arm, fire a viciously low-line kick and re-ground instantly. This will disrupt his balance.

Unless you are Superman (or Superfoot), don't kick too high, and do not execute two or more kicks without re-grounding your foot between kicks, especially in our progression when you have already latched onto the opponent's weapon-bearing arm. His movements, even though they result from your first kick, could pull you down and/or off balance. Doing double kicks in the air without re-grounding your kick is always extremely dangerous.

Destroy the ankle. Destroy the knee. Drive the legs to the ground. Smash the groin. Fire knees like cannon balls into the thighs to keep your balance, move with him.

Kick Primer

Skill in kicking serves many purposes. Not only does kicking serve as a major attack weapon, but it also builds support dynamics. The muscles used in kicking build strength that helps your overall balance and hones that balance gyroscope in your brain to survive through the turns and spins of your body in combat. Plus, think of how the overall body dynamics help your leg reaps and sweeps used in takedowns and throw. Inside many grappling techniques provide the fundamentals of kicking!

Practice each of the following:

- 1) with focus mitt, kicking shield training
- 2) as steps inside combat drills
- 3) as steps inside combat scenarios

Teach each of the following whenever possible:

- 1) Standing
- 2) Kneeling
- 3) Prone on your back
- 4) Prone on your side
- 5) While walking or jogging forward and backward

Practice:

- 1) Low targets
- 2) Medium height targets
- 3) Experiment with higher targets for exercise and balance

A collection of some practical kicks in conjunction with the range and position

of having just caught the weapon-bearing limb.

Frontal kicks:

- . The snapping style
- . The combat-modified snap where the foot and shin work around a lead leg
- . The front thrust-vertical foot
- . The front thrust horizontal foot
- . The shin kick
- . Ground versions

Stomp kicks:

- . Standing
- . Ground versions

Knees:

- . Standing
- . Ground versions

Hook kicks:

- . Inward
- . Outward
- . Rear leg
- . Left leg
- . Ground versions

Side kicks:

- . Standing to the right and left
- . Ground versions

Back kicks:

- . Standing
- . Ground version

Spin or turn kicks:

They have a rare time and place where an athlete may execute them effectively.



The frontal snap kick.



The frontal thrust with a pushing vertical foot.



The shin kick.



Knees



Hook kick practice.



Side kicks practice.

The Fork in the Knife Fighting Road

“When you come to a fork in the road, take it!” said Yankee Yogi Berra. At this fork in the progression, we have two very important missions, controlling the weapon-bearing limb and then stunning the opponent. Both need to be done immediately! In this chapter, we kick right after grabbing, but you may also hand strike the face after grabbing, the subject matter of the next segment.

I often teach the kick first because I like to see a practitioner truly cement his grip on the weapon-bearing limb. So often the grip is practiced lamely when coupled with a hand strike. You should practice to strike the head after the grab too. But make sure the knife arm is contained as much as possible.

The Basic Training Set Thus Far:



1) *Evade and contain the weapon limb.*



2) *Disrupt the balance.*

Your Assigned Practice

- . Practice kicking
- . Practice grabbing and kicking versus the 12 angles.

Basic Training Progression 5: Catch, Kick and Strike Practice vs. The 12 Angles

This study progression introduces the hand strike into the combat mix next. You have caught the arm to contain the weapon. The split second you secure the arm, you fire a vicious low-line kick to disrupt the balance, and re-ground instantly. Then let loose a dynamic strike to a key target, usually the head or neck to stun and diminish the sensibilities. If one strike doesn't do the job, bash and bash again and again.

Bash the neck. Crimp the throat. Shatter the jaw. Decimate the nose. You are in fear for your life, and you must stop your attacker. If one vicious bashing isn't enough, bash him again, then again.

Strike Primer

Here is a collection of practical strikes in conjunction with the range and position of having just caught the weapon-bearing limb and kicked. This is an example for when you remain outside the range of the attacking arm and inside the range of the attacking arm.

Here is a working list of arm and body strikes starting at the fingers and working up and through the body.

- . Eye jabs
- . Palm strikes
- . Punches
- . Forearms
- . Elbows
- . Shoulder rams
- . Body rams

Please note I did not list head butts as a major striking tool. Ask any neurosurgeon about the use of head butts as a form of self-defense, they will warn you against purposely splashing your brain against the inside of your skull to hit another skull. It does not matter what part of your skull you strike with, hard or soft, YOUR brain splashes with each impact. Such impacts cause stunning (of YOU! Not just the enemy!), unconsciousness and possible brain damage that may not show up until years later, but occurs non-the-less. You cannot and should not use your head as an impact weapon. You cannot build a fighting system around head butts. Use a head butt only if you have no other choice in your efforts to save your life. You may stun yourself just as much as you stun the enemy. I am not referring to head butts to soft parts of the body such as when executed in ground fighting. Limit your head butts.



Eye jabs. Deliver with fingers partially open and partially bent.



Palm strikes, both hooking and thrusting.



Hammer fist, both the bottom side of the fist and the topside. This saves the frail bones on the back of the hand from painful, debilitating injury. Hammer fists can be safer and more solid than the traditional chopping blade of the open hand. Fingers are often injured in such striking movements.



Punching in the so-called, jab, cross, uppercuts and hooks with vertical, 45 degree slanted, horizontal and palm-up fist positions.



Forearm strikes from all four sides of the forearms.



Elbows from all possible angles.



1) Grab and eye jab.



2) Grab and forearm strike.

Strikes must be utilized as quickly as possible. Capture the limb if at all possible and then batter and bash away.



Grab and hammer.

Your Training Thus Far:



1) Contain the weapon limb.



2) Kick to disrupt the balance.



3) Strike to stun and diminish.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Practice striking
- . Practice catching, kicking and striking versus the 12 angles.

Basic Training Progression 6: Catch, Kick, Strike, Takedown, Finish Vs. The 12 Angles

This study progression introduces the takedown or throw into the combat mix next. You have caught the arm to contain the weapon limb. The split second you have secured the arm, you fired a vicious low-line kick to disrupt the balance and re-ground instantly. Then you let loose a dynamic strike to a key target, usually the head or neck. Now you must deal with the stunned and diminished enemy putting him down and out. The key to the takedown is the stunned head.

Primer 1-Finish the Fight

Your opponent is either an enemy soldier or a criminal. Once dropped and disarmed you must now choose between four fight ending missions. What you select will depend upon the moral, legal, ethical and use of force implications.

Mission 1) Render unconscious

Mission 2) Disable

Mission 3) Control and contain

Mission 4) Death

Overview of Mission 1: Render Unconscious

In order to end this fight you decide you must render the opponent unconscious. You may do this two ways, by impacting his head, or choking his neck. A successful choke may end attacks and set-up searches. I have had the opportunity to use and observe chokes under the combat stress of street fights and arrests. As a police officer, I have choked a few people to unconsciousness, and some of my partners, have choked suspects out in my presence. I have seen people drop limp and unconscious after only a few seconds! Then others hang on for much longer. It depends on a lot of factors and attributes of both the choker and the chokee.

Choking someone out has always been a question of oxygen. It's either about air traveling to the lungs-through the windpipe, or air traveling to the brain-through the blood vessels. The so-called sleeper is when you cut off the blood supply running to the brain. If you squeeze the windpipe you will most likely be wrestling with a man "land-drowning." He will come alive and air swim while under your choke.

You must be prepared for this sudden and explosive reaction, especially if you are not as big or strong as the person you are choking. I have seen a 5' 4", 125 pound police officer apply a regulation, text-book choke on a stout six-footer, and the officer fly off his feet like a scarf around the bigger man's neck. The suspect's windpipe was attacked and he began to "air swim." We all took the man down and cuffed him. The officer admitted he was told by his department's poorly trained and naïve defensive tactics officer that this choke would work against anybody, anytime.

Look for the accompanying spasms, watering eyes, running nose, gasps,

etc. to see if your choke is really working. Remember that a body falling limp may be a false counter tactic to your choke, tricking you into releasing the choke hold too soon. On the other extreme, holding the choke too long will cause brain damage and could kill someone. This too has happened.

Remember that finger breaks, eye pokes and pretending to fall prematurely unconscious are the three big counters to chokes.

“I Give up!” is like “I tap out!” or “Mr. Referee, look he wins, I surrender,” in terms of pleas of submission. When you fight the enemy soldier or criminal, there is another continuum. Can you translate this data into whether you believe a criminal or soldier is telling you the truth when they verbally submit to your capture. This is not college wrestling or a submission fighting contest! In real life, when they give up and tap out and you release the lock, they may well just keep right on fighting. Even if you break their wrist, they may well keep right on fighting. After all, this is your job to survive too! You fight through the pain too!

Chokes may intimidate, render control, deliver pain, cause black outs, brain and windpipe damage and even kill. In some people with pre-existing heart conditions and on drugs, chokes may kill as a result of a condition called positional asphyxia.



Head grab and ground bang and smash. Bang as needed.



A kick to the head. The skull target usually knocks the enemy unconscious. The throat target to the windpipe may kill.

Choking may open your back to attack and may invite more battle with the downed man while you gain a choke positions.

Overview of Mission 2: Disablement

In order to end this fight you might disable the opponent. Your goal is to prevent the enemy from getting up and attacking you immediately or at some point later on.



Disablement is best done by destructions to the legs, such as the knee or ankle. Hands may be smashed and broken, especially the ones holding knives. Broken legs inhibit the enemy from getting up. It at least slows them down. Ankles and knees are often propped up at angles and are very conducive to foot stomps.

Overview of Mission 3: Control and Contain

In order to end this fight you decide you might lock up the opponent or bind him. Your goal is to prevent his escape and an opportunity for him to attack you again. You may do this two ways, through ligatures or judo holds and locks.



Judo holds and locks. Remember when you bend over to execute submissions, your safety clock is ticking. You must ask, "How long can I stay like this?"



Ligatures include handcuffs, shoelaces, belts, sleeves, cable ties, anything that might bind the opponent's limbs. Binding the subject behind his back is better than around his front. Frontal binding allows for too much freedom of arm movement to counter-attacks, plus he can visually see the bindings and devise a plan to untie it.

Overview of Mission 4: Death

Sometimes we must kill the opponent. Multiple, double knee drops can mortally devastate some rib cages. Foot stomps to the head and throat, the reversal and use of captured weapons are some ways to accomplish this task.

Primer 2 - Takedowns and Throws

There are many ways to execute these takedowns and throws. A person grapples with gravity with every step to maintain balance. Takedowns and throws are meant to further disrupt this balancing act. A takedown is essentially when the opponent has tripped off his or her feet. A throw is when both of the opponent's feet have left the ground. You should practice hundreds of takedowns and throws, and then their counters. Here is a list and brief explanation of some of the major grappling concepts. Grappling is centered on attaching and manipulating by way of twists, pulls, pushes or turns to the:

- . Head and/or neck
- . Torso
- . Legs
- . Arms

Head Attacks and Leveraging

- . Head grabs
- . Neck grabs
- . Impacts to both head and neck severe enough to cause loss of balance

Torso Attacks and Leveraging

- . Shoulder grabs
- . Hip grabs
- . Attached equipment and clothing grabs
- . Impacts to the torso

Arm Attacks and Leveraging

- . Biceps pulls
- . Crook of the arm pulls
- . Arm bars
- . Wrist attacks
- . Finger attacks

Leg Attacks and Leveraging

- . Knees attacks inside or outside
- . Ankle attacks inside or outside
- . Reaps to front or rear of legs
- . Impacts to legs that are severe enough to cause loss of balance

There is a lifetime of study involved in takedowns and throws, enough to fill its own encyclopedia series.

The Basic Training Series Thus Far:



1) We have managed to grab and to contain weapon.



2) We have kicked to disrupt balance.



3) We have struck to diminish.



4) Now we take down with enough vengeance to get the job done.





Here is a generic rear takedown-a back kick reap through the leg or legs with corresponding face strike and push. Every good system in the world teaches this one.



1) Dodge the knife and catch.



2) Kick



3) Strike-here a fist to the brachial plexus.



4) Takedown with a stomp behind the knee.



1) Stop and grab the incoming attack.



2) Kick the groin viciously.



3) Forearm strikes...



...as needed.



A leg scoop takedown...



...to drop the enemy.



A palm strike, a knee drop to the groin, and then a shin trap to the weapon bearing limb leads to a finish.

Never stop training in realistic, non-traditional, unarmed combatives that includes striking, kicking, takedowns and throws. Never stop doing skill-developing drills that enhance these attacks and build speed, goal-specific strength and coordination.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Complete this Basic Training Series vs. the 12 angles of attack.

Congratulations!

If you physically work through these drills you will complete your basic training. Next comes the advanced training, equally as important to your survival. It will answer your “what-if” questions. No matter what else you learn or do, you must not forget your basic training. You will continually refer back to the hard-core essence you studied to do battle against the blade attack.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Advanced Training Series

Advanced Training Progression 1:

Fight Against the Enemy's Support Strikes, Grabs and Kicks

Some opponents will attack with the knife and with a hand strike, a grab or a kick. As an unarmed defender, you will use these same tactics to protect yourself.

Fight the Support Hand Strike Primer

In our study progression you snare the attacking arm and the opponent immediately punches at you! People often worry that a two-handed grab opens you up to his empty hand attack, so much so, that they never bother once to practice catching the enemy's arm.



A strike...



...and a follow-up strike.

Practice all the 12 angles adding one-half beat strikes between the angles.

Problem-Solving the Strike

You will usually find yourself either outside or inside the enemy's arms. Here are two main ways to problem solve the 12 angles with the half beat hand strike.



You grab. He punches.



You duck and/or avoid the punch.



If possible ram the captured arm against the punch.



Fire low-line attacks.

Outside response. You are outside the enemy's arms. The enemy punches. Try to use the captured arm to deflect the attack. Also dodge. Continue with the hardcore Basic Training Series.



You grab and the hook punch comes in.



You must let go with one arm.

Inside response. You are inside the opponent's arms. The enemy punches with a hook punch, offering you an angle to block the attack. Let go of your grip and block the incoming attack, then continue to fight. Continue with the Basic Training Series.



Stop it.



Counter attack.



You grab and he punches with a straight-line jab.



You dodge and pass.



and then....



...you counter-attack.

Inside response. You are inside the opponent's arms. The enemy punches with a straight punch. You choose to let go of your grip and pass the punch over. Continue fighting with the Basic Training Series.

Fight the Support Kick Primer



Practice the 12 angles with 1/2 beat kicks.

You will find that there are three major ways to escape the kick.



Counters to kicks 1) Evade the kick utilizing mobility. Sometimes pulling the captured arm with your escape momentum is a sound tactic. He may be off-balance with one leg.



Counters to kicks 2) Cushion the kick to take out most of the impact, if you are stuck here in his kicking range.



Counters to kicks 3) Stop the kick. You might kick the incoming kick as it develops in its early phases.



*You grab the limb, but he kicks.
You avoid the kick and fight on.*



You grab.



He kicks. You evade.



You strike.



You kick.



You takedown.



*As an advanced option
against this stunned
enemy...*



*...you grab the hand. Elbow
the bend of his arm.*



*With this bend, attack
the throat.*



Finish furiously, then
drop a knee to the
groin.

You grab the limb, but he kicks. You pull the one-legged man off
balance.



You get a grab.



He kicks.



Rear back and try to pull him off of his balance. If he is unprepared to stutter-step with this motion, you may be successful. Strike.

Fight the Support Grab Primer



Practice the 12 angles with a one-half beat grab.

Should the enemy grab anywhere but your arm, you may well be able to continue your series of attacks to take him down. Should he grab your arm, you must know releasing techniques.

He grabs your arm. You do a roll-over releasing technique. Continue fighting with the Basic Training Series.



You grab. He grabs.



You strike downward with your elbow to release...



...his grip.



Follow through with a sledge hammer strike to the throat.



Drive a...



power shot to the diaphragm.



*Kick through his legs
and throw him down...*



*...hard on his shoulder
and back.*



Stomp as needed..

He grabs your arm, and you are in tight combat. You wrap the captured limb, push/pull release his grip. Continue fighting with the Basic Training Series.



You manage an arm-wrap grab.



He grabs you.



You reach from your grab and strike his grab.



As you strike you pull free. His arm is still wrapped.



Strike. Fight with the basics.

He grabs your arm. You bite the grip. Watch your face after he releases! You must strike immediately. Continue fighting with the Basic Training Series.



You wrap. He grabs.



*You bite the side of his hand.
He is tempted to release, if
even to strike your face.*



*Elbow to the jaw. Fight on
with the basics.*

Your Assigned Practice

- . Fight against the 12 angles plus hand strikes, to a combat finish.
- . Fight against the 12 angles plus kicks to a combat finish.
- . Fight against the 12 angles plus strikes and kicks.
- . Fight the 12 angles with grabs to a combat finish.

Advanced Training Progression 2: Fight Back Against Fakes and Feints

Fighting against a skilled knife fighter will motivate you to recognize fakes. Like a boxer who fakes high and punches low, the enemy will make a move, expect you to react in the direction and then attack on another line.

Some fighters will question the very idea of fakes, claiming that each move should be an attack. If that attack is thwarted, they will redirect their attack onto another line. But, training setups and fakes provide a highly successful tool to develop muscle memory and strategy. World champions have used this process and laid many opponents low.

Drill 1:

The 12 Angle One Half Beat Fake Drill

You will strike out on the 12 angles, but only less than half way, then re-direct your attack.

Example

Fake on angle 1 series
Fake on angle 1, then strike on angle 2
Fake on angle 1, then strike on angle 3
Fake on angle 1, then strike on angle 4
And so on...

Example

Fake on angle 8, then strike on angle 1
Fake on angle 8, then strike on angle 2
And so on....

In the end, you will progress through all 12 angles with half beats. This drill contains all the major knife and sword fighting manipulations, set ups and movements. In knife vs. knife dueling this drill may well constitute the most important set of manipulations you can learn.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Work through the 12 angles. Fight the fakes to a combat finish.



*He fakes on the angle 1 slash.
Because you trained, you do
not over-commit*

*Then he strikes on angle 2
line. You grab, and fight on
with the basic training series.*



Advanced Training Progression 3: Passing the Attack

Passing the blade is very hard, but sometimes you simply have no choice. The term passing conjures up some kind of martial arts master doing a graceful dance movement. The common skill drills to develop the pass can give you a false sense of security and may look too prissy to work. Many misleading errors occur in passing practicing. These errors, and how they come about, are outlined in detail later in this book.

Against the active, close quarter knife slashing or stabbing attack you must either grab the arm, or pass, to dodge and elude the weapon. You must develop the passing tactic as best you can.

Catching is your primary strategy. Passing is your secondary strategy. When you can't catch, you better dodge and pass. If at all possible, try for an eye jab as you pass.

Primer-Passing

Passing a stabbing attack looks like deflecting. You pass the stabbing attack two basic ways, inward or outward versus a slash, one way is by meeting the force and then collapsing against it and allowing it to go by, either high or low. This allows you a split second to get the rest of your body out of the way. Or, the second way to pass a slash is to integrate with the energy and shovel it high or low.

End the passing as quickly as possible. As long as the razor blade edge or tip of the knife remains free, you are in extreme danger. One will often hear from the novice trainer, "Pass backhand slashes, and grab at inward slashes." Such dictums sound interesting, however you must try to catch *all* arms as quickly as possible and practice.

- . Pass with both hands
- . Pass with one hand
- . Pass high
- . Pass low
- . Twist and dodge with your body
- . Strike during a pass if at all possible
- . Attempt a limb grab as soon as possible

The Single Slash Attack



You miss the grab!

You must pass! A pass may require one hand, two hands, or no hands if you are far enough away.





Then you quickly grab, and blast into your series of attacks.



It is always a solid tactic to try to eye jab during the pass. It is quick and if on target very efficient. Sometimes during a pass a kick to the knee might work, but always be aware of the quick, returning blade, studied in the next block of instruction. You should practice an evasion and a kick versus each of the 12 angles against an aggressive training partner to see what you might get away with. If the knife slashes back, your kick is easy target.

The Double Slash or Stab Attack

Many amateur and skilled knife wielders plan on slashing you multiple times and very quickly. When you fail to contain the weapon-bearing limb, the razor blade is still loose and free for a return attack. To prepare, slash an Angle 1, then slash back on the same line or close to the same. Slash in the angle, and then slash back. On the stabbing angles, you can pump the knife twice, stab and then slash. This adds a challenging problem for the trainee.



Dodge the first slash of Angle 1.



Catch or dodge the back slash.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Study passing drills to enhance your skill. Add strikes during passes.
(Many of these drills are in Volume 1 of the *Knife Fighting Encyclopedia* and appear throughout the SFC Knife/Counter-Knife training videos.
- . The attacker should try to maintain a constant forward pressure by moving forward in a walking pace to a charging pace to create reality.
- . Fight the 12 angles of attack and experiment with passing the first attack.
Then grab and fight.
- . Fight the 12 angles of double slashing attack.

Advanced Training Progression 4: Grounded Versus. a Standing Attacker

In this important study, an attacker punches you in the stomach and you drop to one knee. Your attacker then draws his fixed blade or folder from a sheath and attacks. These scenarios are important for you to deal with reality as well as to gain the win mentality-that you must fight on after an injury.

The Dodge the Blade and Kick Response Module



The attacker punches you.

You drop and...





...he draws.



He strikes on Angle 1, and you duck.



*Drop further and push/pull the legs.
Improvise follow-up kicks upon the downed
opponent as the targets appear. Your options
are attack if you have the chance, or keep
up.*

The Grab and Tackle Response Module



He swings and knocks you down.



He draws. He attacks with an angle 2 back-hand slash. You must catch the weapon-bearing limb because your neck and head are in the path.



In this scenario, you can practice diving against the knee.



You press down on the weapon-bearing limb, pinning the knife hand to the floor.

*You blast his face.
Finish as needed.*





You are downed, having fallen back, or tripped from a centerline stab threat. He stabs very powerfully straight down and at you with an angle 5 attack.



You are fortunate to grab the arm. Watch the knife tip! Kick the face repeatedly. Kick the knee. Then use your feet and legs like scissors to trip and push to prevent him from falling on you.

Strategy Summary

- Option 1) Duck the attack
- Option 2) Grab the attack
- Option 3) Kick the legs
- Option 4) Push/pull the legs
- Option 5) Hybrid opportunities as they develop

Your Assigned Practice

- . Develop dexterity in ground movements like hip pivots, twists, turns and rolls.
- . Continue to develop striking and kicking from knee high and prone positions.
- . Fight the 12 angles after being knocked down to one knee. He quick draws and attacks. You fight back.



You execute a ground round kick to the knee area.



But! He regroups with another slash.



You dodge and pass the attack.



You pin the arm, and you knee strike the face.



You stomp the face.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Continue to develop your practical ground fighting skills.
- . Fight the 12 angles from prone or knee-high positions.

Advanced Training Progression 5: The Mugger's 12 Drill

This is one of the most important drill formats I've ever created. The common street criminal or approaching military threat will often present his blade in threat to try to get you to do his bidding. Here is a training format to prepare you to recognize and experiment with these problems.

Primer - Positions of the Mugger's 12

We have attacked with the 12 Angles. Now we will only position ourselves in these 12 in their starting points. Due to surroundings and possible witnesses, the enemy may position his knife in any one of these positions. Sometimes, as shown here, these weapon presentations might be under the cover of an open jacket or some item the opponent is carrying.



Angle 1) A high right corner threat.



Angle 2) A left corner threat.



Angle 3) A low right corner threat.



Angle 4) A low left corner threat.



Angle 5) A low stab threat.



Angle 6) A high stab threat.



Angle 7) A high stab from the left.



Angle 8) A low threat.



Angle 9) A low threat.



Angle 10) A high stab threat from the right.



Angle 11) A high stab threat from the left.



Angle 12) A high center line threat.

A Mugger's 12 Threat Module



A 12 threat. Your palms-up communicates surrender.



You grab, perhaps after saying words of compliance.



Using your legs and body for launching, you strike and continue with any violent barrage to a combat finish..

The Mugger's 12 Attack

This series involves the mugger presenting his knife in the 12 positions. For whatever reason, he suddenly decides to attack you, straight from where he was posting his threat. At least at this point you see his knife and know how and where the attack comes from. So for the Mugger's 12 you must deal with just a weapon threat presentation. In the Mugger's 12 Attack, he stabs or slashes at you from this presentation point. You will resort back to the Basic Training Series to survive.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Fight the Mugger's Threat 12 to a combat finish.
- . Fight the Mugger's Attack 12 to a combat finish.

Advanced Progression 6: The Pedestrian Drill

This drill is set up in a worst-case scenario. You are about to become a surprised, random victim. Your alert level has dropped. This is why a reflexive, baseline simple block and push escape response may be the best choice you can muster in such an ambush. This drill will build experience in the recognition of surprise attack.

Primer-Blocking and Passing Command and Mastery

Memorize these movements as they appear on a clock, a 12 o'clock, 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock and 9 o'clock positions. These reference points will successfully help you remember the movements.



Solo series on the clock. Practice as shown here with the right arm, then the left arm. When practicing against a trainer's attack, it is wise to rotate your tender, inner forearm away from the knife's possible path as much as possible. Remember you may have long sleeve clothing on that helps too.



Supported series on the clock. Practice with the right as primary and left in support, then switch roles.



Double arm series on the clock.



Double arm zone series on the clock.

The Passes



Practice circular hand motions on the clock position to develop passing reflex.

Pedestrian Module



As you walk, the enemy walks toward you. He has a concealed knife in his hand.



As he approaches, he lashes out at you with an angle of attack.



You barely double tap the incoming ambush assault and maneuver away.



He attacks again, but this time you are better prepared.

What Happens Next?

Once you escape the first contact, you must get away in an orderly retreat or fight. Now alert, you will respond with the basic and advanced training series tactics you've studied in the rest of this volume.

Your Practice Assignment

- . Fight the 12 angles of attack as your training partner walks up to you.
- . Go through the 12, so you may practice with some anticipation. Your partner will attack you once each pass, by number.
- . Mix up the angles.
- . Sometimes the partner will walk right by you and not attack.
- . Carry common items and use them to block and escape.
- . Have several people walk by the trainee and allow only one to surprise attack using a knife.

Advanced Training Progression 7: The Bus Stop Drill

This drill is set up in a worst-case scenario. You are about to become a random victim. And, you are probably at your lowest level of alert. This is why a reflexive, baseline block, push and escape response may be the best you can muster in such an ambush.

Primer 1-Block and Pass

Review the command and mastery motions in the prior segment.

Bus Stop Module



You are standing still, and the enemy walks toward you.



As he approaches, he lashes out at you with an angle of attack.



You barely double tap the incoming assault and maneuver away.



He attacks again, but this time you are better prepared.

What Happens Next?

Once you escape the first contact, you must get away in an orderly retreat or fight. Resort back to the basic training series tactics.

Your Assigned Practice

- . Fight the 12 angles of attack as your training partner walks up to you.
- . Go through the 12, so you can practice with some anticipation.
- . Then the trainer will mix up the angles.
- . Sometimes the partner will walk right by you and not attack.
- . Hold things that you might commonly carry, and use them or work around them.

Advanced Training Progression 8: The Bear Trap Assault

Earlier in this volume I mentioned there are two ways a knife attacker will assault you. He will use his knife for first contact, or he will use his free arm and hand to grab you, then get you with his knife. Either constitutes a really bad situation. Both are responsible for the death, maiming and severe injury of many citizens, police, guards, inmates and soldiers each year. Like the horrific teeth in a powerful bear trap, they put you in an almost inescapable situation. If done correctly the movement is nearly as effective as a sniper's bullet.

After the grab, two things may happen—an intimidating threat presentation or attack. Many times, the grab is executed against you, and the knife is only presented to obtain some criminal gain of wealth, kidnapping, rape, or military gain of intell.

Take solace in the fact that military and criminal histories record many such victims have fought on after receiving 30 or more stab wounds. If they only had a plan while fending off the first 29 stabs!

Primer-Typical Grabs, Threat Poses and/or Stabs



Frontal-The head and neck. The typical problem will be the knife in your neck or throat.



Frontal-Arm Wrap.



Frontal-The Jacket Wrap/Trap. A stunned man has his arm wrapped, and the enemy seats his free hand across the chest and deep inside the sleeve of the far arm. With a tight grip, this handicaps the far arm and helps free a path for the knife.



Rear-Mouth grab with a low stab. As described in volume 2 of the Knife Fighting Encyclopedia: Military Knife Combat, this is a commonly taught killing technique and has met with varying results.



Rear -Mouth grab with a high stab. This is another military grab and kill technique. Veterans sometimes accidentally stab their own opposing arm!



Rear - Arm Torso Wrap

Counter Attack

If the subject grabs and begins to stab you, the main survival strategy is still to capture and contain the weapon-bearing limb. One key to surviving military and criminal attack is the control and containment of the weapon-bearing limb as soon as possible. This is difficult against a skilled fighter with tight economic slashes or quick, pumping stabs.

The longer the weapon's edge and tip remain free, the more damage it may cause you. Is it difficult to grab the attacking arm after the attacker grabs you? That depends on the speed, skill and endurance of the attacker. Review the Synergy Drill chapter ahead about reality training and how deep and committed real attackers often penetrate in after you. Remember that knife attack survivors often sustain numerous serious injuries, yet fight on and win. Usually this is accomplished by clutching the weapon-bearing limb during the assault. Yes, it is hard to grab. That is why you must practice. Your alternative is a free knife ripping you apart until you die.

Go into the conflict armed with your basic and advanced training savvy and skills. Try to win the battle and seek medical help immediately afterward. These scenarios are meant to inspire you to develop responses.

Bear Trap Scenarios Modules

Fighting the Frontal Head Grab



You have little choice but to intercept the thrusting threat, even if he has stabbed you successfully before you gain control.



Clear yourself of the weapon, and hammer and bash the face.



Three elbows strikes, the third a downward smash and a body drop directed at the bend of the arm for a takedown.



Any finish as appropriate.

Fighting the rear grab, knife to the throat.



Search for opportunities to gain control of the knife if the attacker grows distracted, tired or begins negotiating with your comrades.



Thrust an elbow to the torso or an uppercut to diminish your opponent. Your arm feeds into a position inside his arm to get the maximum power grip for control and escape. Hopefully that uppercut stunned and diminished him. Stomp the instep viciously as needed.



Execute another hammer to the weapon limb and a quick eye attack on the rebound. Repeat as needed.



Torque the wrist of the stunned enemy as you back kick through his leg, tossing him down. Finish as needed. A good boot or knee drop to the face is always a wise choice.

Fighting the front arm bar

You have no choice but to intercept the attack and veer it off to the side.





Destroy his lower body with knee blasts to the groin, lower intestines and thighs. Repeat as needed.



If he doubles over, hook an arm and take that energy into a takedown.



As always, the flattened face for unconsciousness, the flattened throat for death.



Your Assigned Practice

- . Start off with an attacker grabbing you in the common Bear Trap. You must experience the rough, powerful grab and ram each time to prepare yourself for reality and create the reflex to fight back.
- . Start in some ground positions. The trainer gains a common ground hold, then pulls a knife.

Advanced Training Progression 9: Unarmed Counters to Quick Draws

Primer-The Hands

“Watch his hands! It’s the hands that will kill you!”

As a young man, my police instructors warned me about them...the hands. Empty hands may serve as a tip-off to impending danger. How they point, chop the air, roll in and out of fists can predicate an attack. As if empty handed attacks aren’t enough, these same hands burrow deep into pockets, belt lines, armpits, ankles and pull out weapons of destruction. As police officers, we have the fear of the criminal quick draw drummed into our psyche, and not just quick draws from the body of the assailant, but from anywhere he can reach and grasp a weapon with those hands.

I had to keep track of hands inside cars, motel rooms, streets, houses, apartments, fields, so many different rural and urban places over 23 years, surrounded by drama, confusion, and most times low light and darkness, I can’t even begin to name them all. Somewhere in all that cacophony of sound, emotion and motion, I still had to zero in on...the hands.

Upon my retirement from police work, and later as a private investigator, I accepted a series of security/body guard assignments for some major recording stars, TV celebrities and book authors. Still a major rule—watch the hands of those around your employer, in and amongst all your other responsibilities. Purses, backpacks, day planners, fanny packs, and shopping bags all became potential caches for weapons. I often had to set up distant drop-off points in lines for such items away from the celebrities during their public appearances.

But enforcement and correctional officers are not the only ones who need to worry about the hands and weapons hidden by strangers. Martial artists and average citizens also need to observe the hands of suspicious individuals around them in their everyday lives. Soldiers taking and herding prisoners of war need to watch the hands. The list goes on and on.

Most individuals spend little or no time focusing on these concerns. We must look to the police sciences as the veteran source of experience and intell in this endeavor. Then we look to martial strategies to take action. Understanding and using the information in this volume is vital for your survival.

Watch the hands. The hands reach for weapons. It is the hands that will kill you.

Detection Tips

A premeditated knife attacker will pack his knife for the quickest of draws. For example the open folder or fixed blade is placed into the small of the back, ready for action. People who commit emotional acts of spontaneous rage will often have their edged weapon packed deeper.



The premeditated criminal and military attacker will carry their knife so they can snatch and flash it in a microsecond. If given the chance, they will unsheathe their weapon from more conventional carries and position it for the quickest of snatches. Some will wrap it in something like a newspaper for their approach.

How do you know knife, hand, stick or gun trouble is coming? How do you shave down response time to a spontaneous assault? Empty-handed or with a weapon, the enemy often telegraphs a pre-violent message.

Some early warning signs of attack or quick draw:

- 1) Your gut instinct that something is not right.
- 2) The enemy appears to be in a sport's like get-ready-to-move stance or position.
- 3) Face flush in shades of red.
- 4) Nervousness, pacing.
- 5) Little to no eye contact, or the thousand-yard stare. He is no longer listening.
- 6) Face down, or head and shoulders upright, chest and back swelled.
- 7) Feigned passivity, or an inappropriate silence or calmness.
- 8) Saying things to create verbal distractions.
- 9) Saying things philosophically about life and off the immediate subject.
- 10) Sudden, inappropriate laughter.
- 11) Making movements or causing visual distraction.
- 12) Dry tongue or in some, excessive salivation.
- 13) Unwarranted attempts to position you during your talk to favor his attack.
- 14) The location and stance of his friends/accomplices around you.
- 15) Unusual positioning of the hands.
- 16) Finger pointing.
- 17) Hands pumping due to blood leaving the extremities.
- 18) Hands positioned near common weapon carry sites on the body.
- 19) Sudden sweating.
- 20) Pounding fists into objects.
- 21) Kicking and stomping objects.
- 22) Twitching.
- 23) Frowning and/or sneering, tensing of facial muscles.

Primary, Quick Draw Carry Sites

Learn the common, primary carry sites for a knife. These are the quick draw sites, and the sites you must examine or pat down if you have the chance.

- 1) pockets
- 2) beltline
- 3) armpit
- 4) small of the back
- 5) upper back
- 6) chest/necklaces holsters
- 7) forearm rigs
- 8) lunge and reach, the physical reach proximity
- 9) bags, purses, camera cases, carry items
- 10) belt-like wallets, fanny packs

Secondary Carry Sites

These locations are not usually quick draw-based, but still emergency-based carries. These are still survival concerns if you wind up grappling and ground fighting, or if you lose control of the enemy long enough for them to reach to these sites and dig out their knives.

- 1) ankle-carry underpants or boots
- 2) inside bullet-proof vests
- 3) small of the back
- 4) necklace/static cord weapons inside clothing
- 5) belt buckle weapons
- 6) pen guns and penknives in pockets

Become aware of the “clothing prints” they are the outlines visible on clothing that protruding parts of weapons cause. The shape of a handle of some sort of weapon may protrude into a jacket. Tight pants may sometimes reveal a weapon. With the proliferation of folding knives, the clip to the knife is often visible.

The Tug and Pull of Weapon Carry

Become aware of minor and major body motions of someone who is armed. Armed people often move awkwardly, shifting their clothing and beltlines when carrying weapons, especially shoulder holsters and similar harness carries. Subjects often tap their weapons for a feeling of security. The edges and weight of guns and knives may become cumbersome to carry. Watch a group of patrol officers or detectives at a restaurant getting up or down from their table or in and out of their cars. Watch how they re-position and tug on their pistols belts and assorted gear. Now track those movements to other concealed carries. Observe potential enemies as they enter or exit cars, restaurant tables, chairs, bend, lift, climb stairs—any physical movements that might cause weapons to shift and motivate their owners to subconsciously tap or re-position them.

Quick Drawing Movements

I am going to list nicknames again for easily identifiable quick draws, with the hope that they will leave a lasting impression on you. This is the first scientific step in studying them and learning their counters.

- . The Gunslinger Quick Draw
- . The Samurai Quick Draw
- . The Napoleon Quick Draw
- . The Detective Cross Draw
- . The Gypsy Quick Draw
- . The Cobbler Quick Draw
- . The Lunge and Reach Draw



Same-side Draw. Take note of the Arm Triangle such a movement creates.



Same-side Draw, this time with assisted jacket pull to clear weapon side.



The Classic Cross Draw, which could come from the beltline of the armpit.



The Small of the Back Draw.



Gypsy Reach Quick Draw, to the high back (with back pack)



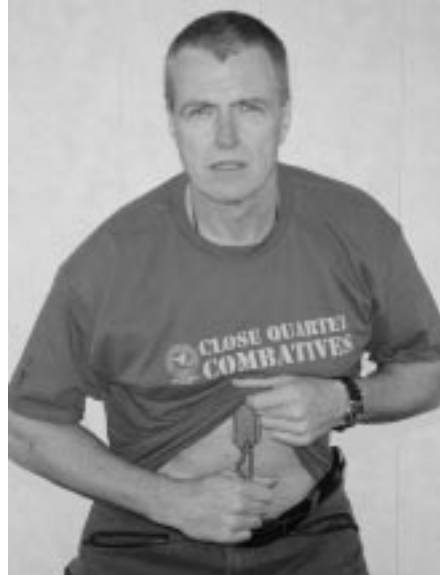
Forearm Rig Draw.



The Ankle Draw. Not always a quick draw. He must set you up in such a way so he can access his ankle knife. For example, espionage agents train to walk into potentially hot situations with a shoe untied. This untied shoe provides a ruse to access the ankle gun or knife..



The Common Folder Pocket Draw. Note the static cord. Look for such cords.



The Neck Knife Draw.



The Static Cord Draw. The subject grabs the handle of his knife, even if buried deep inside a pocket. The lanyard string, cloth or chain is attached from the sheath usually to the belt. The act of pulling the blade pulls the cord to the sheath tight and that clears the knife from the sheath.

Three Phases of the Quick Draw

Identifying the three phases of a quick draw, early-phase, mid-phase and late-phase, helps you scientifically study this process and then identify and learn steps to defeat it.



Phase 1) The early phase is when the weapon is actually about to be extracted or is in the process of being extracted, say about the first 20 percent of the quick draw.



Phase 2) Mid-phase is when the weapon is out and in the first 20 to 60 percent or so of going into action.



Phase 3) Late phase is the last 40 percent of the pull.

The Need to Intercept

Using the following ideas and methods can help you predict or detect an attempted weapon pull. Here are some important strategies to use when you are in close quarters versus a potential knife quick draw and your weapon is either sheathed as in a knife, holstered as in a pistol, or you are unarmed.

There are times when you cannot draw your weapon fast enough to counter the enemy's quick draw, and your first and only chance must be a decisive empty hand interception. In pre-fight situations, pay attention to the hands. It is the hands that will kill you. The mili-second encounter goes in a calendar like this:

Event 1: The enemy suddenly reaches for a weapon.

Event 2: You see the movement and process the thought.

Event 3: He touches his weapon.

Event 4: You begin to reach for your weapon.

Event 5: He pulls his weapon.

Event 6: You touch your weapon.

Event 7: He uses his weapon as you are pulling yours.

Psychologists have calculated the process of motor stimulus and response down to the millisecond. First the event occurs before your eyes. You see it and it becomes a *sensation*, a neural transmission from the eyes to the brain. Next a *perception* that retrieves long-term memory to organize, classify and interrupt the sensation. Next you have a *response* selection, a formulation of a course of action. Then an *execution* of an action plan. Event. Witness. Sensation. Perception. Response plan. Execution. Experts tell us this takes about 200 milliseconds. What if you are not paying complete attention, or are distracted? You take more milliseconds, even a second or two to see a man draw a weapon and attack.

Police testing demonstrates that if a person perceives a threat, such as the movement or quick draw of a weapon in the hands of another, it could take from .5 to 1.5 seconds for his or her brain to process that information and complete a reaction like going for a weapon. Even if an officer's gun was already out in a perceived threat, ready posture, the average officer needs .73 seconds to raise the weapon up to the shooter's eye level and fire. Drawing from a holstered side arm will take much longer. Tests show from 1.9 seconds or more depending upon the holster.

In close quarters, at times you may have a better chance at survival with this strategy.

Event 1: The enemy suddenly reaches for a weapon.

Event 2: You see the movement and process the thought.

Event 3: He touches his weapon.

Event 4: You begin to reach for his weapon hand.

Event 5: He pulls his weapon.

Event 6: You intercept his weapon quick draw.

This Quick Draw interception takes an important life-saving step out of the process. If your counter causes the attacker to drop or eject his weapon and it is still nearby within his reach, try to:

- 1) Grab it, and secure it on you somewhere. For example, in a pocket.
- 2) Grab it, and use it against the enemy.
- 3) Leave it alone or toss it further away if you are confident the opponent is alone and will not escape the predicament you placed him in, or escape your future control. Ascertaining if someone is alone, is always a difficult analysis. Not impossible, but risky.

Gunslinger Quick Draw Counters



Smash the hand as he opens his combat folder. When someone tries to open their folder, they do not obtain a normal and powerful grip on their knife. Their fingers are trying to access the opening mechanism. A powerful hand smash can jar the knife clean out of the opponent's hand, knock the partially open blade back into the handle, or worst of all-do nothing! Then you move to...Plan B.

The Arm Bar Hammerlock or Rear Arm bar



The Gunslinger Draw offers you The Triangle. Start looking for that triangle!



Crash in and interrupt the Quick Draw. If possible, always ram your fingers into the eyes.



Wrap the arm up in the common arm bar. Be violent about the wrap. Yank on the torso in the process.

If you encounter a muscular and non-limber subject, rip some power shots to the side of the neck and then tornado drill the body to the ground. Drill him again as needed.



The Knifer's Irish Whip

Rush in and seize the hand holding the knife. Blast in with your legs! RUN! What looks tricky on paper can be done with explosive force. Shoulder ram the torso like a pro football player.





Explode in using your whole body like a track runner, then turn suddenly and maneuver to stab the opponent in his side.



Position your shoulder to break any resisting strength in his arm. Ram the bend of his arm with your shoulder. This breaks his protective isometric.



Stab or twist the hand back for a takedown.

Jam the Detective Counter vs. The Detective's Cross Draw or Hip Cross Draw



Identify the common quick draw involved with a cross draw. See the motion and then jam the drawing hand..



Pommel the throat. Repeat as needed. Watch that other hand!



Your punching arm drops and wraps the weapon-bearing limb. Sledge hammer your forearm to the brachial stun zone. Remember he is still an armed assailant, and you are in fear of your life.



Execute this takedown follow-up on the stunned man, or the following series.



Throw the Detective Cross Draw

This is a mid-phase intercept of the quick drawing movement by catching the weapon-bearing limbs momentum then execute an outer wrist lock/torque-style throw. This is a very difficult move to execute, but has been, and can be done. Rip the hell out of the wrist, and aim the palm of his hand right down to the ground.



Outer Wrist Throw in a mid-phase counter.



Counter to the Napoleon Quick Draw

In the following series, you see the common movements involved with pulling a neck knife. Charge with a stunning strike and a pinning hand. Devastate the head and trap the weapon-drawing limb. Bash and bash as needed.



One Counter to the Cobbler Quick Draw

If you see your enemy scrambling to dig his weapon out from his ankle area, power kick the leg, then foot stomp the ankle to cause severe ligament damage or a break. Grab the weapon, if possible, after the enemy is sufficiently stunned.



One Counter to the Gypsy Quick Draw

The high arm position allows for many grappling techniques. Here you detect the common movement involved with drawing a knife from a high back carry. In this early phase counter series, a simple yet powerful underarm attack, a quick snap could be brought to severely damage the shoulder, or the movement could be used as a takedown. Prevent more quick draws! Search your stunned opponent for more weapons and remove them!





Your Assigned Practice

- . Practice your striking and kicking.
- . Practice your takedowns and throws.
- . Continue your studies in the psychology of violence.
- . Practice these scenarios.
- . Development more counters.

Advanced Training Progression 10: Search for Weapons



“Squeeze Down” or Reach, to Recover-Seize The Weapon!

There is one more important post fight phase that is vital to review. The combat encounter is not over till it's over! We have previously identified the look and types of carry sites and quick draws, and the major ways one attacks with stabbing and slashing angles, we can create some practical tactics to defeat them.

Any counter to a quick draw scenario must include combative follow-ups and an emphasis on getting the enemy's weapon from him. In the course of combat after your initial countering move, you have made the discovery that he has another weapon, and he will indeed use it!

Three things will have happened as a result of your counter to a Quick Draw...

- 1) you have interrupted the weapon pull and it is still seated in its carry site;
- 2) you have knocked the weapon loose and it may be a *lunge and reach* threat, to be picked up by the opponent or other enemies;
- 3) You have failed to significantly counter the quick draw, or the weapon was already out and displayed when you first saw it. Now you must utilize:
 - a) your empty hand vs. knife strategies and skills.
 - b) your knife vs. knife strategies and skills.
 - c) in short, the infamous “go to Plan B strategy.”

Any counter to a knife threat, slash or stab must also include combative follow-ups and an emphasis on getting the enemy’s weapon from him. Weapons you see and weapons you don’t see yet.

Given that you have disabled the enemy to some level in your encounter. Now you must choose. Search or run? It will depend completely on who you are, why you are there and what you are. As a citizen, or soldier, or guard, or cop, you must do what it takes to keep yourself and others safe and/or complete your mission.

If the enemy has been sufficiently disabled and/or submits, you may begin a search of his person for the weapon you know he has, and the other weapons you haven’t detected yet!

How do you search? You squeeze! Squeezing, or crush the body area is a hand sensitivity technique that is superior to just patting or tapping the clothing and body of the enemy. You start with a pat contact but you must squeeze your hand until you are satisfied there are no weapons under your hand.

Where do you look? You squeeze all the primary and secondary carry sites listed in this volume. A quick and somewhat paranoid disclaimer-crushing, like all strategies and techniques has drawbacks. Be sensitive to crushing into needles, razor blades or unsheathed knives and other dangerous things.

Soldiers are often tasked with the responsibility of taking and escorting prisoners. Many soldiers and hardly a dojo-trained martial artist have follow-up weapons searches burned into their muscle memories like police and correctional enforcement officers do. Searching a body is a daily task for them. Police and correctional officers have handcuffs to control the opponent, but without cuffs or similar quick applied restraints, anyone searching for weapons is in a hot situation and involved in a very dangerous task.

Correctional prisoners have been video-taped in prison yards practicing techniques to defeat the common searches used by police officers, and consequently, common searches that would be used by soldiers and citizens. Explosive and quick movements performed by the untrained have also been a problem for police officers, and such can disrupt a weapon search and reverse the whole situation.

The up against the wall search has almost disappeared from police work. Too dangerous. The same with the on-the-knees search. These may well just be positions best used to slow a subject's quick escape.

The Search Continuum

How thorough must your weapon search be? There is a continuum from cavity search to the simple and so-called "patdown." We arrested a woman once who hid a small revolver inside her vagina. Certainly not a quick draw carry site. Time to successfully search depends on many factors

Search Factor 1: How distracted or disabled is the opponent?

Search Factor 2: How much real time do you have?

Search Factor 3: What are the dangers in your environment?

What distracts or controls your opponent for a search?

1: A successful choke or any similar unconsciousness.

2: Pain. Real Pain. Pain that distracts. Pain that defeats. Pain that pleads.

3: A believable plea of submission.

CHAPTER FIVE

Masters Training Series

Masters Training Progression 1: Straight to the Throw

Sometimes the energy of the knife attack is so focused that you feel the need to bypass the diminishing strikes and unbalancing kicks to the legs and go straight to a takedown or throw. This takes many years of savvy and practice, and even then it is dangerous and difficult to execute.

Unfortunately most martial arts courses start students out at this masters-degree level. They expect right-to-the-throw level performances. Most students discover sadly in a real fight they have great difficulty doing these technical moves without the help of the Basic and Advanced Training Series. If all these takedowns and throws are so great, why do Judo experts in matches have so much trouble doing them to each other? Because they can't strike their opponent first to stun him!



The Tornado Throw. You totally integrated into and with the enemy's attack.



The Tornado Throw. The enemy's energy is totally integrated.





The Over the Shoulder Arm Break. Total integration of the enemy's stabbing energy so quickly that he doesn't even bend his elbow or twist his shoulder. Thrust up with your legs against the area above his elbow as you yank down on the wrist and arm. This joint ripping and/or dislocation should cause a grip-disabling disarm.



Masters Training Progression 2: Knife Disarming

Take the Knife from the Hand of the Man.

It is very hard for say-a savvy Army Ranger or a street cop to open a martial arts magazine and see a guy dressed in a Filipino martial arts vest snatching a stabbing knife hand and doing some thumb grab and knife strip disarm. “What?” they proclaim! “The enemy has no grip on that knife handle?” Untrained citizens also deduce the same flaws. This is one of the big mistakes in martial arts training. It often has no combative edge and teaches techniques isolated from the anger and chaos of real combat, practiced with compliant partners. This leads to dangerous levels of delusion.

Never has there been more confusion about knife combat than what surrounds the subject of knife disarming. Practiced in partial steps alone, the disarm looks impossible and unrealistic, but there is a continuum of probability that exists proving knife disarms are possible. For naysayers, for people who proclaim knife takeaways and disarms are impossible and fantasies, read the following progression.

You can reach down and remove the knife from the hand of a dead man.

You can take the knife from the hand of a man who is almost dead.

You can take the knife from the hand of a man who is unconscious.

You can take the knife from the hand of a man who is almost unconscious.

You can take the knife from the hand of a man who is half conscious.

And so on...

No one can argue that removing the knife would get increasingly difficult as the enemy goes from cold dead to more alert in our progression. We logically deduce that we absolutely must stun the enemy as severely and quickly as possible if we wish to disarm him with relative levels of difficulty. This is the key to winning, the key to success and the key to disarming the opponent. The more stunned? The better your chance! Disarms are possible in the right context.

Primer- The Four Main Models of Knife Disarms

- 1) Verbal Disarms - Convincing words of surrender.
- 2) Impact Disarms - Impacts to the body severe enough to knock the knife free.
- 3) Force/Counter Force, Push/Pull - Against an appropriately stunned opponent, prying the knife away from his hands.
- 4) Extreme Wrist Wrenching

1) Verbal Disarm- using the art of persuasion to disarm the enemy.



Once you identify the enemy and calculate his motives, you may use this intelligence to persuade the attacker to surrender or stand down.

2) Impact Disarms - Impact to the body severe enough to knock the knife free. Remember the opponent's clothing may interfere with the intensity of the strike.



A stunning power strike to the head may diminish the fighter, sometimes enough to cause him to drop the knife in the best-case scenario.



If you can't sledgehammer the face or neck due to reach, then a sledgehammer strike to the biceps may weaken the grip and sometimes even dislodge the grip on the weapon. Next bash the face and neck. Then consider the disarm.

3) The Force/Counter Force, Push/Pull Knife Disarm Progression

This progression is just a conceptual study, a collection of like possibilities to

master and pass on should this very singular opportunity arrive. Many knives have been disarmed in this manner, by the trained and even by the untrained. At the right second, a man experiencing fatigue or injury or diminishment may fall prey to your disarm in this manner. Since the concept involves using a grip upon the opponent's weapon, this level is a good one to introduce the idea and practice.

Grabbing Opportunity 1: Grab the forearm.

Grabbing Opportunity 2: Grab the wrist.

Grabbing Opportunity 3: Grab the hand. Try to secure the thumb or ball of the thumb.

The Outside Series

You are positioned outside the arm. Practice this left-handed and right-handed. The success is contingent upon the freshly grabbed enemy maintaining a tight wrist, as one will expect in the stress of combat. In your practice sessions your training partner will often offer you a loose, friendly, unstressed classroom untightened wrist. You will push on the blade, the wrist will bend and no disarm! This atmosphere will rob you of the key element to success!

After a strike-grab, pull and push the palm or back of your hand against the side of blade. Practice to keep the hand open until the last second to snatch the knife. Some will train to snatch the knife in a peeling motion whereupon they grab much of the handle. Next they stab with their newly acquired weapon.



Stun him severely first!



Now push and pull!



After a strike-grab, pull and push your forearm or even your triceps against the side of blade. This is good when you wear winter clothing.

The Inside Series

You wind up inside the arms of the enemy. He must have a tightened wrist, a very strong possibility in combat.



After stunning strikes, your hand grabs the weapon-bearing limb as your palm pulls in on the blade.

Counters to the Push/Pull Counter Force Disarm

Know the counters so you can counter his response to you.

Counter 1: He limps up his wrist and reduces your stripping power. Sometimes if his wrist and hand goes with the disarm energy he may retain the knife through the motion.

Counter 2: Switch hands. He feeds the about-to-be-stripped knife into his other free hand.

Extreme Wrist Wrenching



*In the finishing phases, a uniquely positioned wrist-ripper-disarm works when used with extreme wrenching force.
It is a violent, twisting yank to the outside.*

*Note: For more ideas, drills, how-to photos, combat scenarios, tactics and strategies, read *The Foundation: Volume 1 of the Knife Fighting Encyclopedia*.*

Master's Training Progression 3: Skill-Developing Synergy Drills

Primer - Beware the Loop!

The term *drill* may mean several things in a military framework, from a reservist's weekend, to marching, to a field exercise. To the martial artist, drills come in many different names like *sensitivity*, *synergy*, *flow*, *energy* and *attribute* are common martial arts monikers for the patterned exercises for two people standing before each other and practicing repetitive moves.

I know many martial artists who are flow-drill and pattern-drill experts. They know and exercise hundreds of choreographed drills, performing them in an artistic, beautiful manner. But most cannot really fight successfully against a chaotic, madman, blitz attacker. This is because they have become drill experts, not fighting experts. They have prioritized the wrong end product of their study. In your martial close quarter combat drill study you must de-prioritize the drill and re-prioritize the crisis rehearsal of combat scenario practice. Practice drills only support reality. Everyone easily understands this but fails to measure their training clocks when working out, so often dedicating their time to learning forms, katas, and the flow drills and the redundant sets of dead grandmasters.

The Curse of the Loop

Step A, B, C, D, then A, B, C, D...and so on. These multi-step practice patterns are meant to be broken with inserted tactics to fire and/or counter. Across the world, martial students are making the grievous mistake of struggling to invent ways to get back into the looping pattern after the inserted tactic. I have seen practitioners toil and sweat to invent ways to get back into the loop of their drill. Many are more proud of the looping drill they invented than the execution of the actual tactic. But the training loop is meant only to be broken. Break the loop with the tactic. Start the loop over.

Real world combat is full of training stories of looping mistakes. One of the worst is of the California police officer that spent many hours disarming a pistol from a training partner. He performed hundreds of repetitions, snatching the gun and quickly handing it back to the partner immediately to keep a training flow going. As you might expect, one day he disarmed a criminal and reflexively handed the handgun right back to the criminal. The criminal shot him dead.

Keep the *Curse of the Loop* in mind when you practice. Forget about rejoining the loop. It is just an unproductive and dangerous mind game. End the

loop with your tactic. Stop. Then start again.

The Curse of the Safe Training Range

Getting away with murder. Your murder.”

You and your martial arts partner get through with a serious knife practice session. You are feeling pretty good, pretty confident. You walk down the gym stairs and into the basketball court and ask an acquaintance, “Hey, practice with me for a second. Attack me with this rubber knife.”

Your friend drops the basketball. Shrugs his shoulders and takes the knife. He suddenly lunges deep into your torso with one simple, powerful, direct movement. The contact is deep and if the knife were real, a gutting and deadly wound. You are shocked! Moments ago, upstairs, you were a dancing master, passing, tapping and disarming the knife in mid-air within a beautiful flow. How did this happen? Chances are you were practicing very choreographed patterns of arm movements, quite stationary and just a footstep away from reality in a range I call the *safe training range*.

It is a safer training range just because there is less chance of injury. Always working out in this range is a mindless and easy mistake. You and your training partner routinely strike stances in front of each other at a given range and distance where tactics may be exercised. While you might even shuffle your feet, the central focus of contact stays about the same, just about elbow to elbow. Unfortunately this range is just back beyond the realistic reach of a real weapon attack.

Soon, mindlessly, the contact point on the knife training is this middle, a center zone where knife attacks are never really delivered to penetrate and therefore are easily and safely passed, where wrists are easily grabbed and torqued, where knives are intercepted and disarmed. Hundreds of these false repetitions lead to unsafe muscle memory. Misconceptions then abound.

Training Ranges

Easy Knife Passing Drill in the Safe Training Range.



The Safe Training Range exists between the posts here in the above photo. In this range of practice, you and your partner innocently do not deliver deep, real, body contact strikes, but rather engage in manageable skill training. In this training range, the myth of passing the blade, and fancy knife tricks are over emphasized and are quite successful, tricking the practitioners into delusionary skills.

These myths and tricks get over-practiced in a false sense of security. Practitioners walk away thinking they have learned knife fighting. When exercising unarmed versus the knife, these same problems may arise. In this safe range mindset format, trainers attack trainees and they never realistically reach out to make real combat contact.



Reality Contact Range exists between the posts in the above photos, or shoulder to shoulder. In this range, the trainer is actually targeting deeper where a real killer would strike. Now, trainee responses will be more difficult and more realistic.

Grabbing, Passing and Parrying! A Lesson

Inherited knowledge is a body of information that exists within a culture. Often it is passed on and not evaluated or questioned as truth. There exists in the knife training world a popular theory espoused by many that declares:

***“It is impossible to grab the weapon-bearing limb of a knife attacker.
One must always pass or parry the weapon-bearing limb.”***

This despite the worldwide success stories of survivors who latched onto the attacking limb of an armed enemy and fought like hell and then won.

Many blindly accept this proclamation. I recently saw a self-defense video where the trainer said, “Never try to grab the knife arm because the attacker will just pull back and cut you.”

Then, not TWO minutes later he grabbed the weapon arm to execute a takedown. In fact you will see all no-grab naysayers leap blindly out of their *no-grab doctrine* to perform takedowns and throws and not even realize they violated a doctrine they espoused only moments earlier.

This parry/pass over-emphasis is supported by too much practice in the safe training range. The enemy is a step too far back to really slash your torso and in fact has mindlessly become conditioned NOT to target your torso but rather to sling the knife to the center of this safe training range. Thus, these thoughtless and naïve instructors over-emphasize passing the weapon attack as their major counter-tactic. I am convinced the main survival strategy is grabbing the weapon-bearing limb and passing comes only when the grab fails.

In actuality, if the trainer will attack you and extend his knife into real, deep torso slashing and stabbing contact, it may often be easier to grab the arm and fight on from there with powerful strikes and kicks.

Synergy Drills

There are some unarmed vs. the knife energy drills to triple your speed, grip and coordination. For an extensive breakdown of these drills, refer to Volume 1: The Foundation of the *Knife Fighting Encyclopedia* for additional skill drills.

These drills are only to support the combat scenario. One way to maximize your flow drill training and overcome its downfalls is to keep moving while doing them. This constantly changes the spatial relationship. And do not worry about inventing ways to loop back into the drill after an insert. Let it go! Just start over again. You must practice with drills, but become a fighting expert, not a drill expert.

Summary

You have seen and experienced a lot from working through these combat progression drills. You must physically work through each step, not just read them and look over the photos. Train your body.

By working through every stage, you will gain the savvy to speak on the unarmed vs. the knife subject and evaluate what works where and when.

I told you in the beginning of this book to remember that it is not any one thing that works all the time, but rather a working savvy of all these things that best prepares you for survival in military combat and fighting criminals.

May all your enemies prove ignorant and untrained!

Prepare for the chaos of combat.

Train for the chaos!

Thrive in chaos!